

current existing levy of \$1.05 down to 75 cents, still a significant reduction; from 87.5 cents to 60 cents for the first class cities, still a significant reduction in property taxes. They're still going to have to make adjustments. There is going to have to be many communities around the state that will have to look at the options that we're providing them to merge, consolidate, joint delivery of services. Many counties have done that, and cities have done that already, that have joint police and fire agreements, have joint solid waste management agreements, and joint jail facilities. So it's not like there hasn't been an attempt by some and successful attempts to already try to deliver effective efficient government to their constituents by merging or consolidating or providing the joint delivery of services. I recognize that. But I think it's important that we don't tie one arm behind the backs of those smaller towns and villages by taking a reduction of \$1.05 down to 45 cents. That's more than just onerous. That's more than just tough medicine to swallow. For many, it will be very...or next to impossible to accomplish. Now I recognize that there is going to be a change in the equalization. Assuming that that passes, that you are talking about \$5 million of General Fund in addition to the insurance tax, is that \$5 million going to be available? After it gets put in place, will this source of money be the first place that the state looks when it gets into a little financial difficulty? Those are some of the uncertainties that are out there. I am certainly not, by bringing this amendment to the floor, saying that cities, towns, and villages are special or deserve preferential treatment relative to the other political subdivisions that are affected by LB 1114. What I am saying is I believe, based on my background, my experience, that this would cause a great deal of difficulty past the point that I think that the members would want to impose upon this class of political subdivisions. I assume there will be a number of questions. I will try my best to respond to them. I think this is definitely a reasonable approach, and one that I hope you will look at carefully and adopt to the committee amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. You've heard the opening on the Maurstad amendment. Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. Why not a dollar? Or two dollars? The point that is being missed with the Maurstad amendment is the core of 1114,